The RECONSTRUCTIONIST

VOL. XIV. FEBRUARY 20, 1948 I ADAR 10, 5708 No. I

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edicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of rael's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

is published bi-weekly for twenty consecutive issues, starting in October, by the Jewish Reconstructionist Foundation, Inc., 15 West 86th Street, New York 24, N. Y. Subscription $3.00 per year; 15¢ per copy; foreign 25¢ extra; membership in the Foundationn, $5.00 per year, including subscription to *The Reconstructionist*. Reentered as second class matter October 3, 1935, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

BEN ZION BOKSER is rabbi of Forest Hills Jewish Center, Forest Hills, N. Y., and a former chaplain in the U. S. armed forces.

GRACE GOLDIN has frequently contributed articles and poetry to *The Reconstructionist.*

FRIEDA CLARK HYMAN is a very promising poet whose work has often appeared in *The Reconstructionist.*

JOSEPH YASSER is a well known Jewish musicologist and chairman of the Jewish Music Forum.

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The RECONSTRUCTIONIST

Vol. XIV. February 20, 1948 1 Adar 10, 5708 No. 1

EDITORIALS

THE CONSPIRACY TO SABOTAGE THE UNITED NATIONS

A NEW and dangerous line is being taken by certain American Government officials on the Palestine issue. They are attempting to prove that it is against the national interests of the United States to help enforce the UN decision to partition Palestine. The argument is that, should the cold war with Russia give way eventually to all-out armed conflict, our access to the oil of the Middle East would be indispensable to victory.

Such may be the American national interests as viewed by the militarists and power politicians who are busy fighting our next war. They are not the interests of America as viewed by the American people. The farmer and the business man, the factory worker and the professional are interested not in fighting World War III but in preventing it. And certainly the fathers and mothers whose sons will have to do the fighting and dying feel that the prevention of "the next war" (which, let us not forget, would be an atomic war) must be the major objective of American foreign policy.

And, if there is one lesson that the experience of recent years has taught us, it is that world peace can only be maintained by giving authority to organs of world unity. The sabotage of the League of Nations after World War I by the big powers, who, then as now, put faith in balances of power rather than in collective security, gave the green light to Nazi and Fascist aggression. And the appeasement of Nazi blackmail because of our "national interest" in preventing the spread of Bolshevism was at that time justified by appeal to the same sort of "national interests" by which the militarists and imperialists in our government are today justifying their appeasement of the Arab aggressors. The lives of millions of soldiers and civilians of all the nations who took part in the struggle and six million Jews slaughtered by the Nazis were the price which the world paid for the stupid blundering of our over-clever diplomats who thought that they were being realistic when they ignored moral considerations.

Are we going to fall again into the same trap? Are we going to sabotage the United Nations as the League of Nations was sabotaged? Do we really believe that, if it should come to a war and Russia would offer a higher price for Arab friendship than we, we could rely on the loyalty of venal Arab governments not to sell out to the higher

bidder? Did Great Britain gain so much by selling Czechoslovakia to the Nazis that America should now imitate her by selling the Jews to the Arabs?

If some of our American diplomats and strategists feared God half as much as they fear Russia, our country would be much more secure. For security rests more on moral factors than the military or diplomatic mind realizes. This is no obscurantist mysticism but plain common sense. The last war has completely shattered the economic and political structure of the world. Only two powers emerge with any considerable measure of strength: Russia and the United States. Each represents a different social and economic system, and each in its way aspires to world leadership. In their mutual rivalry each desires and needs the goodwill of other peoples. As believers in American democracy, we are confident that America has more to offer to the world and that the American way of life will commend itself to other peoples because of its freedom and justice.

But if the other peoples should become convinced that what the Communists say of us is true, if they should come to believe that we, too, are power-drunk and bent on imperialist expansion, if they should be given evidence that we are ready to betray smaller and weaker powers, to sell democracies down the river to predatory feudal rulers, we would surely lose the goodwill of those who are tied to us by a common faith in democracy or hope of achieving democracy, and would be putting our reliance on treacherous and criminal powers.

That is the sinister aspect of the proposal not to commit America to the implementation of the UN partition plan. The issue is not merely one of what is just to the Jews; the issue is one of what is just to the people of America and of the world.

MEN OF FAME, SPEAK OUT!

THE Palestine crisis deepens. Every day that passes without decisive action by the UN, and without an open declaration of a vigorous stand by our own government, encourages the lawlessness of the Arabs and condones further sabotage by the British. The Security Council, at this writing, prepares to discuss the Palestine question in the light of its possible threat to world peace. It is precisely now that every Jew who has a spark of Jewish feeling in him must rally to the defense of his people. Unless every single ounce of energy is exerted to arouse the world, and especially our own Government, a major tragedy may result.

The average rank and file Jew must, of course, enroll in Zionist organizations, and must apply pressure wherever pressure can be applied with effectiveness. Money must pour in for constructive purposes and for defense.

We are particularly in need, however, at this vital moment in history, of the outspoken aid of those men who have rendered signal service to the American nation, but who, as Jews, thus far have kept themselves aloof from active participation in the Jewish struggle for existence. We refer, for example, to men like Bernard Baruch, David Lilienthal, Robert Oppenheimer and similar ranking figures on the American scene. They have earned the respect and admiration of all Americans for their services in war and peace time. They would get a hearing from the top-flight leaders of the administration.

Others, like Samuel Rosenman, Albert Einstein and Lewis Strauss, have been identified with Jewish life, in one way or another; they too should lift their voices now to stave off the holocaust which

threatens to engulf the tragic survivors of Hitlerian murder.

They dare not remain silent and let our Government back down on the partition decision. If Americans are to have faith in their own leaders and if the nations of the world are to retain any semblance of respect for our integrity and honor, if the United Nations is not to be reduced to a farce, if another war is not to be precipitated, then these men who have risen to fame under the blessed aegis of democracy must stand up and be counted among the defenders of their fellow Jews. *These men are known as Jews, and anti-Semites penalize other Jews for the power and the fame which these men have justly earned. In their heart of hearts they know that their own fate is bound up with the fate of Jewry.* They should certainly know that the fate of all Jews in the world is bound up with the fate of the Yishuv.

While the UN commissions debate genocide, the nazified Arab band leaders are plotting genocide aganst the people of Eretz Yisrael. Silence now will be fatal. We plead with these men—and others of their stature whom we have not mentioned—to cast piddling considerations to the winds, to rise heroically and to expose the conspiracy which has placed in jeopardy mankind's second attempt at unity and Israel's last hope.

GIVE THE COMMUNITY CENTER MOVEMENT A CHANCE

THE Jewish Community Center movement is important. It has succeeded in affiliating with it great and increasing numbers, who are not reached by the synagogue, the Zionist movement or other significant institutions through which the Jewish will to live expresses itself. If only as a potential source of Jewish man power for purposes of Jewish communal survival and growth, its importance should be recognized. It must not be neglected but guided in a direction that will help it to serve the vital needs of Jewry, both the needs of its own members and those of other Jews.

For that reason, we hailed the appearance of the Janowsky report recommending a more affirmative and positive Jewish attitude on the part of Jewish Community Centers. We particularly rejoiced at the evident determintaion of the Jewish Welfare Board to implement the recommendations of the report.

But the efforts at implementation are encountering obstacles. Some of these obstacles are being raised, as might be expected, from those who are ideologically opposed to an intensification of the Jewishness of the Community Center program. Others result from the attitude of men who approve of an affirmative program of Jewish living but do not like to see it entrusted nationally to the Jewish Welfare Board or locally to Jewish community centers.

The ideological opposition is led by a group which is sponsoring what it calls an "independent study" of the Janowsky Report. What is means by "independent" we do not know, unless it means independent of any prejudice in favor of Judaism. The Janowsky Commission was itself independent in the sense that none of its members were actively engaged in conducting Jewish Center activities; none had a personal axe to grind.

The leaders of the ideological opposition are doubtless the signers of a letter requesting support for the project, namely, Elinor H. Bernheim, Elliot Cohen, Anne W. Langman, Joseph Willen, Carl M. Loeb, Jr. They profess not to be interested "in fostering or promoting a controversy but rather in developing a constructive program *which has a pos-*

sibility of gaining wide acceptance and support." (Italics ours.) They particularly want to review "the method and the conclusions of the study concerning the role of the Jewish Center in American communities and in American life generally, the question of 'Jewish content' of Center programs as recommended by the report and the varieties of orientation of the various segments of the American Jewish community to Jewish tradition, ritual, and practice as they bear upon the recommendations."

The names of the sponsors are advance notice of the kind of independent study that they will make. Not one among them is known to the public as actively interested in the synagogue, in Jewish religious observance, in Zionism, in the organization of a democratic Jewish community or in any other movement that is outspoken in its assertion of the will of Jewry to continue living and functioning as a united people. Their purpose is clearly to keep the Center movement uncommitted.

It is not difficult to foresee the conclusions to which the study will come. The study is clearly a device to mobilize Jewish escapists, assimilationists and the cynically indifferent among Jewish intellectuals behind a movement to deter Jewish Centers from a clear and positive commitment to Jewish loyalties. It will have a particularly strong backing among those Jewish Center workers who must either reeducate themselves radically to qualify for Jewish Center work under the proposed reforms, or quit their present jobs. They will "discover" that the new policy lacks "the possibility of gaining wide acceptance and support."

It is unfortunate that, at the very time when the Jewish Center movement is trying to reorient itself to the positive values in Jewish life, it frequently meets with opposition and obstruction from those who ideologically are its natural allies. Many rabbis and lay leaders of congregations have no faith in the ability of the Center movement to reform itself since so many of its workers are cold to Jewish religious and cultural values. They ask, in effect: "Can the leopard change its spots"—can the Center movement, even with the encouragement and direction of the National Jewish Welfare Board, rid itself of the negativism of its previous attitude? They therefore tend to carp at the local Community Center and alienate from it the support of the religious community.

One cannot escape the impression that, behind this criticism of the Center, there is a conflict of vested interests. The synagogue, although for various reasons it cannot enroll in its ranks all whom the Center has succeeded in affiliating with it, views the Center as a rival for public favor. Yet, if the synagogue is in earnest about wanting to spread the spiritual values of the Jewish tradition among the mass of Jews, it should realize that it cannot expect to make every Jew a member of a congregation. It should therefore see a potential ally in the Center movement and should earnestly and patiently endeavor to cooperate with the Center as far as possible and help it to enhance the scope and power of its Jewish program.

We appeal to both types of critics of the Jewish Center movement to give it a chance. To those who doubt whether an affirmative Jewish stand can gain for the Center movement "wide acceptance and support," we say: Do not sabotage the plan before it has had a chance to stand the test of experimentation. What Jews today, in their present state of ignorance and laxity, want is no criterion of what they need. Alcoholics *want* alcohol, but they *need* to abstain from it. The neutral Jews have had things their way

long enough and the Janowsky Commission weighed the result of their work and found it wanting. Now give the affirmative Jews a chance. Let us see what they can do. Let us see whether those affiliated with the Jewish Center, after having been exposed to the influence of the new, affirmative program for a number of years, may not begin to want what they need, a richer, fuller and more demanding Jewish life.

And to those who lack faith in the ability of the Center movement to live up to its new principles, we also say: Give the movement a chance. Its leaders are trying to do the right thing. They have a hard enough fight on their hands in struggling against escapist and assimilationist influences. Do not make it harder for them by sniping at them with negative criticism. Rather cooperate with them. Look at the Center movement as a "home mission" to the unaffiliated and indifferent Jew. The synagogue should not lay claim to a monopoly of Judaism. It should take an example from Mosheh Rabbenu. He was not resentful when others began to "prophesy in the camp." His response was: "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets!"

REALITIES AND VALUES

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS BY now aware that the Arab Higher Executive has organized the murder and the looting of Jews, and that these have not been mere sporadic and spontaneous riots.

What the public may not know, however, is that the Mufti's gangsters, in order to get the Palestinian Arabs to fight the Jews, had to institute a reign of terror against peace-loving Arabs, one that has almost destroyed the Arab economy. Such is the consternation among the native Arab population that it is giving concern to the Arab leaders.

Twenty thousand Arabs, drawn particularly from the more respectable and responsible classes, have fled Palestine because of the threats and extortions of the Mufti's gangstesrs. Among the fugitives is no less a personage than Auni Abdul Hadi, a former leader of the Arab Higher Executive.

The Arab Higher Executive has sought to check this movement by asking the border states to stop issuing visas to Arabs wanting to leave the country. The depressing effect of this exodus on the local population is reflected in articles in the Arab press commenting on the deteriorating social and economic conditions.

These facts should be made known, because they indicate that, if the Arab aggression were halted by vigorous action on the part of the United Nations, elements whom the Mufti's reign of terror has antagonized could assist in organizing the Arabs for a program of peace and reconstruction.

▼

LOUIS KRAFT IS GOING TO Eretz Yisrael to help in the establishment of a Jewish Community Center in Jerusalem.

Such an institution under wise and understanding guidance could do an inestimable amount of good. It is badly needed, particularly in view of the total absence of social and recreational activities from the program of the synagogue in Eretz Yisrael. The synagogue there assumes no responsibility for promoting the social welfare of the people in other ways than by worship and the study of the religious classics.

There is urgent need, moreover, for bringing the young people of the old Orthodox community into social and fraternal contact with the newer progressive elements of the community. At present, they feel themselves snubbed by the more

Westernized Jews and their feeling of inferiority and non-acceptance may be a partial explanation of the unusually large number of Orthodox youngsters who are found among the Jewish terrorist organizations.

The head of a Jewish Community Center in Jerusalem will have no sinecure, but, if he is a man who has a deep faith in the possibilities of Jewish life, a good understanding of the problems confronting him, and a sympathetic insight into the personal needs and the various social and cultural backgrounds of the people with whom he must deal, he will eventually be able to make of his institution a tremendous force for good in the Yishuv.

▼

THE TRINITY METHODIST Church of Rochester, N. Y., has organized the Trinity Production Company to produce educational and religious films.

A Hebrew Educational Recording Co. in New York City announces the publication of records to teach the chanting of the *haftarah* and its *berakot*. Separate records have been prepared for every *haftarah* of the yearly cycle.

These two otherwise unrelated items are significant of the growing interest in the use of audio-visual aids in religious education.

Readers of Dr. Dinin's article in our preceding issue will recall his plea for the preparation of such material for Jewish education on a vast scale by a national Jewish educational agency.

American Association for Jewish Education please notice.

▼

IT IS ALMOST AXIOMATIC WITH most people today that not only must business come before pleasure, but that it must come before worship and religious observance. One has to keep on the jump in this busy world of ours.

Apparently our keeping on the jump is not doing us any good. The "strenuous life," at least after middle age, is responsible for the increasing number of cardiac cases in our midst. So at least thinks Dr. Wingate M. Johnson, of Winston-Salem, N. C., professor of clinical medicine at the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. Speaking to the Chicago Heart Association he said:

"Even more important than the annual vacation of two weeks or more are frequent week-end vacations. Every one needs a free afternoon a week, in addition to Sunday. The observance of the Sabbath is based as much upon hygienic principles as upon moral tenets."

So if you are disinclined to take your rabbi's advice to observe the Sabbath, take the doctor's.

▼

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY, THE non-sectarian university under Jewish sponsorship, which will open in the fall of this year, announces that it has distributed fifteen thousand specimen application forms to high school principals throughout the country. The wording of the forms is such as to "secure as Brandeis students those young men and women who are qualified scholastically, without reference to race, color or religion."

This suggests one way to circumvent the *numerus clausus* prevailing in our universities. If the various minorities excluded by the social snobbishness and class selfishness of our patrons of learning could establish enough such schools of their own, the present undemocratic pattern might be broken down.

At any rate, we are proud and happy that a Jewishly sponsored university will afford, not only to Jews but to Negroes and other groups commonly discriminated

(*Continued on Page* 24)

Human Nature and the Quest for Peace*

By BEN ZION BOKSER

BEHAVIOR is, in some respects, a determinant of nature; and to comprehend the reactions of any creature in the world, it is necessary to refer to the properties which are inherent in its being. As a child of Nature, man's behavior in the world cannot be understood without reference to his ultimate essence as a person. Seeking a clue to the ways in which man acts, we must always go back to some conception of human nature.

Is There Any Hope for Man?

What is man that he behaves as he does in the world? We are especially concerned with his tendency to wage war. Wisdom he has; and he can probe into the mysteries of the universe to master her secrets. Skill he has; and he can contrive by the power of his hand and brain the machines which help him harness the elements, and control the world about him. He has even wrested the secret of the atom, and through it, he has won a source of power, vast and staggering to the imagination. Despite all man's advantages, however, human life is in constant peril. Repeatedly man has loosed against himself the violence of war, which makes a mockery of all that he knows and all that he has.

His latest triumph in harnessing the power of the atom may indeed prove to be his final downfall, for he has used that power to fashion a more devastating tool of war. Given a new war, waged with atomic weapons, what is likely to be left of us and of our civilization? Yet, as we watch the widening gulf between nations and between social systems in our day, such a new war faces us as a grave possibility. What is responsible for this folly of man? And is there any hope that he will ever be cured of it?

The Uniqueness of the Individual, a Source of Tension

The most significant fact about human nature is that every man is a unique individual. The Creator who made man performed the great wonder of pouring into each person differentiated capacities and talents. In all the multiplicity of individuals who live in this world, none duplicates another. Though they have much in common, they remain unique centers of being, seeing the universe in unique perspectives. This is perhaps the only element of equality among human beings—they are all, in some special respect, different from one another. As the Talmud observed: "A man strikes many coins from one die and they are all alike. The Holy One, blessed be He, however, strikes every person from the die of the first man, but no one resembles another." (*Sanhedrin*, 38a).

Human differentiation is reinforced by environmental factors, which amplify the work of natural endowment. The circumstances under which we live, circumstances of time and space, and of the impingement of other persons upon us, vary with different individuals. The emergent pattern of personality reflects the contribution of both, the endowments of nature as well as the pressures of environment. And as men finally develop, they face one another, in some respects, as total strangers who, for all the ties that binds them together, must nevertheless remain alien to one another.

The uniqueness of the human individu-

* Address delivered before the 8th Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion.

al is a source of the tension and conflict in the world, for it tends to particularize the individual into a kind of private world, where his experiences may touch upon the experiences of others, but can never be fully shared by them. His tastes, his values, his loves and hungers will in some special fashion reflect his own *differentiated personality.* If men were able to live their individual lives in separate worlds, they could fulfill the full claims of their private natures. But man cannot live alone; and he is constantly thrust into communication with other men. The encounter between all these different individuals necessarily produces tension. The tension may be mild or violent, depending on the temperaments of the individuals involved, and upon the issues at stake in the disagreement. But in some form tension is the inescapable law of all human relationships.

Tension Is Universal

The tension which the uniqueness of individuals creates operates on all levels of life, and in most cases it finds release without violence. Most human fellowships have achieved stability, despite the divergent pressures from their constituent memberships. The family is not the only community where people have learned to make up after they quarrel. Indeed, the ties that link them into a unity become deepened after each successful resolution of controversy. As the tree becomes toughened with each storm it withstands, so does every society. It is toughened by tension, and strengthened by every crisis it overcomes.

But the calm which follows the storm is always a temporary calm. Indeed, the very covenants by which men resolve their conflicts, become the subjects of new disagreements, for individuals remain unique and they will differ in interpreting the terms of these covenants. When Mr. Molotov and Mr. Marshall disagreed at Moscow about what had been agreed upon at Potsdam, one of them may be dishonest. There is, however, the possibility that they are both sincere. Their disagreement may flow from their different perspectives in viewing the facts, thus illustrating one of the normal dilemmas to which man is fated by his very nature.

The uniqueness of individuals carries over to the groups they fashion. Families, fraternal groups, trade unions, learned societies, cities, nations—they all reflect the qualities of the people that form them. And despite all that they may have in common, they will in a multitude of subtle ways stand alone, and represent what is shared by no one else. And out of these divergencies will flow misunderstandings, conflicts of interests and judgment. They will each assert their particular point of view with as much forcefulness as they can command. They will assert themselves with the forcefulness of persuasion, through deliberation and argument, through appeals to the mind and the heart. When these fail, they may even seek to employ coercion.

Tension as the Dynamism of Progress

The tension of individuals and groups is, despite all the disadvantages which flow from it, one of the principal assets of human life, for it is the dynamism by which man rises toward an ever greater perfection. The differentiation of life, in individuals and communities, is not a falsification. Life, in its most universal being, is like that ball of light which is refracted into many varied colors; they are all different and they are all true. Each is a thread in the pattern of the whole. It is only blindness which begets the illusion that differences mean incompatibility.

The fact that differentiated lives face each other with aggressiveness is a guarantee that the riches of individuality shall not be lost to the world. Aggressiveness is the necessary pressure which a particular person or society requires to assert itself in the face of the large assemblage of mankind that might otherwise drown out its voice. When it overreaches itself it evokes a corresponding reaction in others. This action and reaction constitute the recurring stimulation which makes for growth, and for continuous creation in life. As Rabbi Obadiah Seforno observed, God separated mankind into distinct nations, following the effort to build a tower reaching the heavens, as a means of curing men of their primitivism. Had they remained undifferentiated, they would have stagnated indefinitely in their idolatrous culture. The play of differentiated group experiences was to stimulate their growth toward the vision of a universal God. (*Commentary to Genesis,* 11.6).

The Human Problem

The human problem then is not that there are disagreements in the world. Those who direct their efforts to the total elimination of tension from individual and group relationships are engaged in a futile enterprise. Theirs is a utopian dream, which can never be realized, because it is the projection of a wish in defiance of the stubborn facts of nature. Nor would the realization of this dream be a boon to human life, for it would destroy the dialectic which keeps life aglow with vitality and creativeness. The assertion of each individual self with all its concomitant aggressiveness has every appearance of evil. But it is of such evil that God builds the kingdom of the good. A Rabbinic parable tells the story that the *Yetzer ha-Ra,* the evil spirit, was once imprisoned in order to liberate life from its thrall. But in place of liberation there came inertness; and all the creative forces in human life came to a complete standstill. The *Yetzer ha-Ra* was released so that life might go on (*Yoma,* 69b).

The problem which faces us is the fact that so many of the tensions in human relations are not resolved peacefully but explode into violence. How can we, while respecting the right of individual persons and groups to assert their individuality, secure a transfer from violent to peaceful forms in the expression of whatever antagonisms develop between them? The fate *of our civilization depends* upon our ability to affect such a transfer.

Thus will the diverse lives, through their very diversity and the very clashes which are precipitated by this diversity, contribute to a nobler life for mankind, instead of begetting devastation and death, to which new war will inevitably lead us.

The problem meets us especially at the frontier of the national community. Not all subordinate communities have learned the secret of peaceful release to conflict. Witness the mob violence and race riots, the industrial clashes, and family break-ups, which abound in our society. Nevertheless, the threat represented by these conflicts is local in character. As we reach the national community the threat is much graver. For here violent conflict is conceived as a normal channel for expressing antagonism; and modern nations have been in the formal business of preparing the tools of mutual destruction as incidental to the implementation of foreign policy. With the vast powers that highly industrialized nations can command, with atomic energy finally available as the latest means of destruction, the danger of international war has become the danger of collective human annihilation.

The Lesson of Humility

The transfer in the expression of human tension from violent to peaceful forms is achieved through a growing humility which teaches a man the wisdom of knowing his true place in creation. All men and all human communities are, in some special way, uniquely endowed. By the same token, however, they all are also uniquely deficient. Every ray of color refracted from its central source represents the absence as well as the presence of some unique elements of light, for each ray of color is the partial quality of light. It must amplify itself by the other colors in the spectrum to achieve its wholeness. Refraction only aids us in experiencing the depths of light's reality, which we miss in surface vision. And the uniquenesses of personality are, similarly, distinctive aspects of a totality in which all are included. Incompatible particularities could never be in a universe wrought by one universal God. In such a universe all particularities must necessarily harmonize in a comprehensive wholeness in which each finds its proper place.

It is only blindness that begets the illusion in particular individuals that they are, not a part, but the whole. Thus they seek to absolutize themselves, and recognize no need of halting at any frontiers. They see no mandate to respect another life form, no less sacred than their own; and they surely see no reason to regard another life form as a means of their own amplification and growth. Out of that blindness flows the pride of fanaticism and imperialism. Because we love our doctrine we proclaim all other doctrines to be spurious, and deny salvation to those outside our fellowship. Pride may even dress itself up as altruism and we then seek to become the "benefactors" of other men, by attempting to absolutize our way of life, and make it dominant throughout all mankind.

We do not deny that there is a wide gulf between truth and error, an infinitely wide gulf; and that some doctrines must be combated as false. But the essence of falsehood is that very blindness and pride which exaggerates something authentic in experience and attempts to carry it beyond its legitimate scope. It is the old sin of idolatry, which is the absolutizing of the partial, that raises a man or any other particularity of existence to the level of God.

Since God has created a plurality of persons, with distinctive individual selves, each capable of unique experiences, it is for us to allow for a plurality of life forms. Acting under this mandate, why, for instance, can we not permit a pluralism of economic systems to function, without mutual threats of extirpation? The threat of war in our day has become menacingly great because some men can only see an economy of so-called "free enterprise"; a collectivist economy stirs their ire, and they are ready to battle for its extermination. On the other side, the collectivists see only *their* doctrine as true, and if they but could, they would not hesitate to impose their way on the rest of the world. Much of today's tension between the East and the West is compounded of this pride and blindness, which has its practitioners on both sides of the fence. Economic pluralism, as every other form of pluralism, is bound to engender tension, for neither system can operate in isolation from the other. But given peaceful expressions to this tension, there would be a mutual stimulation and growth, which would make for the continued perfection of each. The road to progress, on all levels of life, is in the open encounter of free individuals and free societies; it is in the free market of ideas.

Dawn Is Made Amid the Darkness

Is there any hope that men will learn humility, and overcome the blindness and pride which threaten to be their undoing? There is a Rabbinic parable speculating on God's occupation once He had completed the work of creation, and the suggestion is made that He is presently engaged in matching couples, decreeing who should be married to whom. Jewish teachers accepted this as a worthy enough enterprise for God, and one sufficiently difficult to merit His own solicitude. Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague suggests, however, the deeper insight that God's activity consists in the general process of harmonization, of overcoming the exaggerations of blind individualism, of forging unities among diverse and seemingly incompatible realms of being. (*Beer ha-Golah, pp.* 79-81). Like the dawn which is being made while darkness still reigns, peace is being born while strife prevails, even while strife's thunder and lightning are being heard in the land.

Thus We Are Being Healed

The medicine by which we are being healed works subtly, and it is compounded of various ingredients. It consists of an idea, which in turn is being reinforced by experience. Principally through Israel's prophets, God has revealed the vision of Himself as the universal Creator and Redeemer, who cares about all His creatures, with man as the center of His solicitude. Implied in this vision is the moral imperative to preserve life, to fashion the kind of world order which will give a maximum play to each individual in accordance with the unique facts of his being. This idea is reinforced on the one hand by the positive experience of peaceful human relationships. Every democratic society, from the well ordered family to the self-governing nation, illustrates life's enhancement through the open encounter of free people, through the resolution of differences by means of reason and deliberation. And each such society is a challenge calling for the enlargement of freedom and peace, which must not halt anywhere, which must finally include the entire family of the world's national communities.

Experience reinforces this idea on another level, too, for a coercive society cannot long maintain itself. The aggressiveness by which individuality is ultimately safeguarded, will assert itself in the victims of coercion, and they will rebel against their fate. In the ensuing explosion those who wield power become finally involved, even as are their victims; and the vision of man's sanctity as a child of God becomes vindicated through the tragic consequences which follow its denial. The dread of an atomic war thunders its mighty warning to people who might otherwise not heed the truth, that men had better act as brothers. The alternative is collective extermination.

Ideas Are Seeds

Men learn slowly. Ideas are like seeds cast on the ground; it takes time for them to germinate and to yield their precious harvest. And man was endowed not only with individuality but with free will, because of which he must make his own decisions, choosing the right from among other alternatives that exercise their appeal to him. In our own day we have witnessed the rejection of the great idea which holds the promise of man's ultimate liberation, in favor of various competing ideas. The blindness of human pride is amply represented by the current ideologies in which value is centered not in the universal community of life as a creation of God, but in some parochial community, the race, the particular nation, or, as in Marxism, the particular social class. Some have even asserted

that man is the measure of all things, and that values are subject to the prevailing tastes of individuals. But as events unfold, they reveal the final quality of the ideas which inspire them; and man will in time pass up, and pluck out the weeds in the garden of life, in favor of the health-bearing seed which grows among them.

The creation of peace and freedom involves the surrender on the part of certain people of inequitable shares of the world's wealth or power; and they are hesitant in making what they believe to be a sacrifice. Occasionally we may be deluded by a temporary advantage in power so that, in considering the threat of war, we feel confident of victory. The delusion of a secret weapon has made many nations adamant in pressing for their own advantage, because they felt immune to the threatening consequences. But history has its own dynamism; we only know where events start, but not where they will take us. The way of coercion has invariably spelled tragedy to all concerned. Moreover, the destruction of any life, including the life of the antagonist, is a permanent loss to all mankind. It is an improverishment of life itself, and since we depend for our own amplification upon all other men, it is our own improverishment, too.

Our Responsibility

We are offered no assurance that we of this generation will necessarily learn this lesson. We are only invited to assume a responsibility. Will we learn our lesson, and will we learn it ere it is too late? Or will our generation have to taste again of the cup of bitterness in new war? Some children must burn themselves repeatedly before they learn to be careful with fire. God, in the metaphor of Jeremiah, is the great Potter, who discards every imperfect vessel wrought, that out of the same clay He may build anew toward a greater perfection (*Jeremiah*, 18,1-6). If we are found wanting, God will seek out a worthier generation of men through whom to achieve His purposes. But the responsibility is ours.

We are summoned to organize life equitably, to give every unique individual and group its proper place within a universal community of life. Such a community will find, in the peaceful encounter of its constituent elements, the means of its own continuing growth and perfection.

As Arnold Toynbee has generalized from his own study of history: "The shuttle which shoots backwards and forwards across the loom of time in a perpetual to-and-fro is all this time bringing into existence a tapestry in which there is manifestly a developing design and not simply an endless repetition of this same pattern. . . . There is a message of encouragement for us children of the Western civilization as we drift today alone, with none but stricken civilizations around us. . . . The divine spark of creative power is still alive in us, and, if we have the grace to kindle it into flame, then the stars in their courses cannot defeat our efforts to attain the goals of human endeavor." (*Arnold J. Toynbee, A Study of History, pp.* 253 *ff.*).

Brotherhood Through Music

By JOSEPH YASSER

AS in previous years, a Brotherhood Week sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews is being observed in many parts of this country. At the numerous mass meetings and other gatherings planned by this inter-faith organization, it is natural to expect that speakers will strongly urge a closer rapprochement between the two groups of people on the basis of common historical, ethical and other bonds, as found in the greater part of the Bible.

In this connection, it seems worth while to suggest here that such a rapprochement may also be achieved to a very marked degree through the common interest of Christians and Jews in Biblical music. (Incidentally, Brotherhood Week occurs during Jewish Music Month.) I refer to this music not so much in the broad sense of the term (which includes and even stresses the textual content of biblical songs) as in the stricter sense, implying the ancient and specific form of melodic manifestation.

As a matter of fact, the rapprochement in question may, in a way, be even more effective within this purely musical domain. For it goes without saying that musical phenomena, though they often are technically associated with elements of speech and language, cannot possibly involve any dogmatic irreconcilability.

Music of the Bible

It may well be pointed out in this respect, that, with the exception of a few isolated allusions to pagan music, all the direct and indirect musical references scattered throughout the Hebrew and Christian portions of the entire Bible—from Genesis to Revelation—clearly bear witness to a single and unbroken musical tradition without the slightest conflict between any of its consecutive stages.

Let us consider, for instance, the strictly musical implications of such biblical references as the Song of Moses and his liberated people after the crossing of the Red Sea, or the thundering blasts of trumpets during the proclamation of the Ten Commandments, or the Seraphic Chant of Sanctification in the vision of Isaiah, or the mammoth consecrational services at the Temple of Jerusalem, or the Song of the Heavenly Host, heralding "peace on earth, good-will towards men," or the singing of the Passover Hymn by Jesus and his disciples at the conclusion of the Last Supper, or even St. John's exalted depiction of apocalyptic musical performances.

In all these manifestations, belonging partly to the Old and partly to the New Dispensation, one will find the faithful reflection of manifold musical experiences of one and the same people, who for centuries lived practically under the same cultural conditions. These people were bound, therefore, to create a homogeneous and self-sustained form of musical art which, in ancient times, was based largely on long established melodic patterns and poetical rhythms.

Contrary to widespread belief, the actual melodic material of this ancient art has not been lost completely. For, through special comparative and analytical methods, a number of its basically immutable motifs have been discovered and authenticated in the oldest portions of the Hebrew liturgies all over the world, as well as in certain branches of the early Christian chant.

Contacting the Western World

That the Hebrew musical tradition, first carried to the primitive Judeo-Christian communities, was eventually transplanted into post-biblical Christian life, both religious and secular, may furthermore be inferred from the writings of the Church Fathers.

Thus, the statement, "Christ sang a hymn that we do the same," attributed to John Chrysostom, seems almost a command to follow or "imitate" this oft-mentioned and Hebrew-tinted Gospel act. The noted ecclesiastic also pleaded for the singing of Old Testament Psalms during ordinary work, and especially at meals, apart from their use at divine services.

According to Jerome, another outstanding patristic figure, Scriptural Psalms and *hallelujahs* were memorized by Christian children from their earliest years, while adults sometimes studied them in the original Hebrew. The same writer relates, on a different occasion, that "you could not go into the fields but you might hear the ploughman's *hallelujahs,* the mower's hymns and the vine-dresser's chant of the Psalms of David."

And as if in explanation of the character of all this early Christian chanting, we are informed by Damasus and Celestine (fourth and fifth century respectively) that the Psalms were rendered, in those days, conformably to the Jewish tradition.

Music and Good-Will

It is indeed rather heartening to learn that, although Christians and Jews of bygone days had serious differences in theological matters, they have been perpetuating the kind of musical culture which, despite some local coloring in each group, depending partly on linguistic characteristics, was on the whole acceptable to both.

This circumstance should serve as a source of better mutual understanding between the different groups of free peoples living side by side in our own midst. In the first place, Christians and Jews of the modern world are still very strongly bound together by the selfsame ancient musical tradition, partly in its historical connotation, and partly in actual practice. Secondly, we all are today again fostering, as in the past, a basically common musical culture, notwithstanding the manifold "national" languages and dialects flourishing within it, and also despite the fact that this modern and complex culture differs in so many respects from its early and unsophisticated predecessor.

We must thoroughly realize our profound indebtedness to both these cultures —ancient and modern—in the field of music and that of the humanities in general. Above all, we must be willing to exert our utmost and unlimited efforts towards their further development: the intensified study of the ancient Hebrew and Christian musical tradition, on the one hand, and the enrichment of our present-day art, sometimes in combination with this study, on the other.

It is precisely upon teamwork of this kind—constructive, absorbing and highly gratifying—that the permanent cooperation of "different" but free human beings largely depends, and on which brotherhood thrives.

The Shekinah Speaks

By FRIEDA CLARK HYMAN

Unto this barbed cage I can be blind
For there are golden scrolls I can unwind
Lodged within my ark of memory.
Upon the gleaming parchment I can see
Him stand as once he stood upon the heights
Of Neboh and viewed with me the dark-bright lights
That rayed from off this land. Again the shades
I see efface the sheen of groves and fade
The lustrous carpets 'neath the trees; again
The many-breasted goddess spawns her shame
And greedy Baals with sucking fiery craws
Are fed with new-born flesh, while satyr-pawed
Belial whirls about and mocks the chaste
And cleansing desert winds.

Yet did my face
Not cloud, nor trembling tears descend. No need
For tears when 'fore my eyes his valiant seed
With prophet-wrath assailed the gorging Baal
And flailed with sun-lit arms all filth and foul.

No fancied dream of senile age I tell.
'Twas so. Above this known and patterned hell
I see and hear those other passionate ones
Rustling this remembering air. His sons,
Bold titans of the Word, exalting me
For pure and glistening robes of majesty
They draped o'er me.

Oh my loves of old,
You Prophets, Scribes and Pharisees: Not gold
Nor any creature-thing could tempt you from
My court. With meat as well with raven's crumb
My praise you sang. Your mantle now behold
On those who lie beside me in this kraal.
These are your sons, as you were his. I shared
Their rags, their bread. Tenderly they cared
For me through wind-swept wilderness and bore
My eager heart through this, the prison-door
Of Zion's threshold.

Shall I be slain 'neath blows
That smite across the seas from dark Dachaus?
Say who shall vanquish them and save
My spirit from captivity. I crave
Your guileless love, free-born, the courteous manner
Of your youth. Justice, Beauty, Honor,
Truth: Once I heard these attributes
Sweetly as upon the strings of lutes
You called me these upon the soil of Eretz.

Like wounded birds my eyes from Nebo's crest
Droop down.
Bare knees march stolidly around.
In shorts or grey-green cloth they strike the ground
In tune with tyranny's metallic beat.

But oh! Can it be? The winged feet!
Flying o'er vale and mountain-wall
Bearing on their lips the prophet-call.

'Tis true. I stand erect, quickened by
The beating of my heart and by this cry
That swells across my dear, my cherished land.
Upon the barbs the blood of both my hands
Flows unobserved.

For lo! Your other scions
Circling me. Within their blazing lion's
Eyes there burn Judea's ancient fires,
Kindled in the temple of their sires.
All are one. Past and present, bound
And free, joined within an awesome sound,
Joined within Sinaitic rage and might.
"Shame of Dachau-Latrun, you shall not blight
Our soil. You shall be flailed as was the god
Of woodland groves from off our sacred sod."

With eagled wings I soar to Moab's peak
And waken my Beloved from his sleep.
"Arise, my Love, unto my words give ear,
Arise, my dearest Love, the time is here.
Stand tall upon your purple mount. Oh grasp
The heavens by your mighty hands. Clasp
It close as once you did on Rephidim,
Tho' long the battle lines, tho' dark and grim,
Your sons are these who vow to bring me home.
Your sons are these. No longer shall I roam.

Random Thoughts

Wanted: Men and women to serve God.

Discouraged people need not apply. God cannot use them.

* * *

The trouble with most futurists, in art as well as in religion, is that they are really primitives.

* * *

Kindness should not be limited by consciousness of kind.

* * *

The marvel-working Bible, that always saves the soldier's life by causing the fatal bullet to glance away from him, often causes that same bullet to ricochet to the soldier nearby and kill him.

* * *

Specialization is not confined to the arts and sciences.

There is specialization also in the domain of the spiritual. An outstanding example was the late Rabbi Israel of Radun. He specialized in the theory and the practice of the duty of refraining from gossip.

To make sure that he would not be guilty of spreading even unwittingly some false rumor about anybody, he made it a rule never to talk about anyone who was not present.

A zealous disciple of his made the strict observance of the prohibition of gossip the main subject of his sermons.

Once he complained to Rabbi Israel that though his listeners seemed to enjoy his sermons they were none the better for them.

Rabbi Israel tries to console him.

"How long does each sermon last?"

"Two hours."

"For every minute that a person refrains from speaking gossip he will be permitted to bask at least one year in the glory of the Shekinah. Now calculate how many years of bliss you are laying up for those who listen to you and have to keep quiet during those two hours."

* * *

Jewish life in the past was poor in material resources, but rich in man power. Today it is rich in material resources, but poor in man power.

* * *

There is no need for disavowing any resemblance between the avowed war aims and the post-war behavior of the victorius nations as "purely coincidental."

* * *

Not all contemporary primitives are in Africa, Australia and Asia.

* * *

People whose religion begins and ends with worship and ritual practices are like soldiers forever maneuvering but never getting into action.

* * *

The ancient authorities are entitled to vote but not to veto.

* * *

We cannot have faith in God, if we have no faith in man.

* * *

It takes thistledown to disseminate seeds, and the speaker's art to disseminate truth.

The trouble, however, with most speaker's art is that it is all thistledown and no seed.

* * *

If American Jews wish to replace drift with mastery they have to create a direction-finding instrument — a University of Judaism, and a direction-holding instrument — a Jewish Community.

* * *

The warmth of the home, even if at

times rather suffocating, is more likely to hatch the basic human virtues than the free but humanly cold atmosphere of the hotel.

* * *

Although Adam's serpent is said to have been more clever than all the other beasts, he talked far less sense than Balaam's ass.

* * *

If we want the esthetic enjoyment of both trees and a horizon we have to live on a hill.

* * *

Parents whose children have become intellectually and spiritually estranged feel like the hen with a brood of ducklings that take to the water.

* * *

From the way some people act, it seems that man uses the divine image merely as a mask to disguise the beast in him.

* * *

Whatever else religious beliefs are, they are certainly events in a people's history.

* * *

Most modern attempts at fostering religious mysticism are like trying to skate on steam.

* * *

Events alone do not make history; they have also to be told.

* * *

Hypocrisy is the occupational disease of trying to be human.

* * *

The temper of the Jerusalem Jews under the constant irritation of British brutishness is reflected in their new way of saying "Shalom."

They say "Otzer tov," which means "A good curfew to you."

* * *

There surely must be a third alternative to the two kinds of fiction which we have been getting, one that of the romanticists who come trailing clouds of pishposh, and the realists who come collecting in open trucks all the smelly garbage they can lay their hands on.

* * *

Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen in his recent book "Old Errors and New Labels" argues as follows:

"A bad thought set loose is more dangerous than a wild man. . . . There was once a time when Christian society burned the thought (a euphemistic way of saying "burned the man who entertained the thought."—M. M. K.) in order to save society, and after all something can be said in favor of this practice.

"To kill one bad thought may mean the salvation of ten-thousand thinkers."

Now suppose enough people came to the conclusion that the foregoing is itself a very "bad thought," which is not at all improbable.

What would the logical conclusion be?

* * *

G. S. Shaw said: "There is only one religion, though there are a thousand versions of it."

That makes as much and as little sense as saying: "There is only one language, though there are two-thousand versions of it."

* * *

Opportunity combined with danger is the chaos out of which man creates both himself and his world.

* * *

Alcohol makes some gay and others gloomy.

Money makes some generous and others tight-fisted.

Fame makes some humble and others arrogant.

* * *

Many if not most of our psychic difficulties arise from the company we keep.

* * *

To know human nature as it is, the scientific approach is sufficient.

To know human nature as it ought to be, we need also the ethical approach.

To be sure that it can be what it ought to be, we need in addition the religious approach. * * *

Not all religion is good, and not all nationalism is bad.

* * *

Next to intolerance nothing is so intolerable as tolerance. M. M. K.

Book Notes

COLD CHEER IN "JACOB'S DREAM"

JACOB'S DREAM, a Prologue. By Richard Beer-Hofmann. Translated from the German by Ida Bension Wynn. Philadelphia, The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1946. $2.50.

IN Berlin of 1935, Richard Beer - Hofmann's poetic drama, *Jacob's Dream,* was presented before an audience well-equipped to appreciate it. Outside the theatre door stood storm-troopers, warning away Aryans. Within, a Jewish cast played before Jews. On the political wounds these had already suffered, Jacob's princely self-abnegation must have fallen like balm. "Was't but to heap gifts on us," Jacob protested,

"He chose us, promised glory, power and wealth?
Finds He no use for us but to be kings?
I will not rule! Does He not know?
. . . Could I rejoice when all things suffer pain?"

The pain of Berlin Jewry was entrusted to this Jacob, and not theirs alone. The very brook at Beth El calls to him,

"Only a Jacob who me hears
Takes from me loneliness!"

and a stone "growls . . . restraining his sobbing,"

". . . One there must be,
One who my sorrow shall know!"

Who knows sorrow so well as Jacob?—to whom the fallen angel Samael proclaims, "God drags thee with Him through all time." . . . It is through comprehending the pain of all living things that Jacob triumphs. "Not lured by promise, I, nor terror swayed," he cries "with a blissful smile."

"Within me deep where never word can pierce
Sleeps—what grew strange to thee—
a blissful faith!"

How comforting to the betrayed and wretched Jews of Berlin! Here's a Jacob who intimidates Esau and overwhelms him by sheer magnanimity; not, as the Bible had it, a Jacob himself intimidated into magnanimity. Here's Esau breaking out in "angry, pained sobbing"—what a comedown for Esau. After this, Jacob and we can afford to forgive him nobly. For we are brothers, as Jacob reassures him, twining his arm about Esau's arm and with his knife slicing the skin so that their blood ran mingled into the earth. We are brothers, Jacob cries, embracing the mighty one, now so far gone all he wants is to return home and sleep. But before departing Esau asks whistfully, thrice:

"Jacob—say—do you not believe
In your own heart, that I am less
Than you?"

Ah, then he can reassure him, Esau the hunter, "gently stroking his hair":

"My Edom—no!
. . . God wants me thus, and wants you otherwise!
Only because you Edom are—
may I be Jacob!"

May the cheer have been warm and lasting that German Jewry drew from lines like these. We are unfortunately—or rather, most fortunately—in the position to be more critical.

My position in regard to *Jacob's Dream* is a dangerous one. I read no German. And it is a hard thing, seeing a drama only in translation, to determine what of its stature is the translator's, what the author's. When I am tempted to report concerning this play: "Verse, mediocre. Translation, ordinary. Format, indifferent"—I ask myself how well has Milton been translated into German (to cite another author with hankerings after the sublime). I am told by a German friend: badly. But he assures me that, even in poor translation, John Milton profoundly influenced German poetry and drew upon himself scores of imitators. His height as a poet cast a long shadow across the German page. I have tried to measure the shadow of Beer-Hofmann in this translation by Ida Bension Wynn—of whose best quality the passages quoted above serve as fair sample; they likewise illustrate her tendency to fall into Germanic inversions. I have tried to convince myself that, in the original, Beer-Hofmann climbed his great ladder and safely arrived at the cosmic. But I cannot. For the lines too often evaporate in exclamation points. Even his angels are a breathless crew; and despite abundant adverbial stage-directions — unnecessary, had the verse moved aloft under its own power—we must yet take our author's word for God's "tone of infinite love," since the divine words—in English—prove nothing but that Beer-Hofmann had better have chosen a lower theme.

Elaborating neglected scenes from Scripture was a great idea. The poet, Solomon Liptzin tells us in his preface, felt shy with those portions of the Bible where the text itself supplies numerous details. He chose to enlarge the little-spoken-of: his first scene is that where a savage Esau returns home to find his blessing stolen; and his second is an imagined meeting between the sons of Isaac at Beth El, followed by an angel-by-angel account of Jacob's dream. A noble framework—to which the poem in this edition does injustice. Jacob and Esau have been wrenched out of character. What they do is no longer the natural consequence of Biblical situation. They act as symbols, in verse not lofty enough to support symbolism.

For in verse, the cosmic depends upon word-relationships rather than situation. Only a breath of syntax separates true poetry from the creditable conception of Beer-Hofmann:

I wish My guilt toward thee, My son, to be so great
That—as atonement—above all I set thee high!

Nothing is wrong here but the order of the words; but unless we prefer our thought fresh-killed and indigestible, we will turn with relief to the following lines by Milton:

Upheld by Me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By Me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is. . . .

Was it unfair to compare a translation of Beer-Hofmann with *Paradise Lost*?

Yet the snatch of Milton I chose quite at random; while those two lines from *Jacob's Dream* are a climax and the highest reach of its thought.

In the introduction to this volume Dr. Liptzin speaks of "the immortal lines of Beer-Hofmann, the singer of Jewish pain and glory." Is there so great a discrepancy between the translation and its German original?

GRACE GOLDIN

REALITIES AND VALUES

(*Continued from Page* 8)

against, the educational opportunities that would otherwise be denied them.

▼

AMERICAN PROTESTANTS HAVE from the beginning resented the employment of Myron Taylor as the personal representative of the President to the Vatican. It seems to them to give virtual American recognition to the Papal State.

The argument in defense of Roosevelt's sending and Truman's retaining Myron Taylor as their personal representative to the Pope has always been that the Pope has great influence over the populations of many states and is interested, as is the President, in the problem of world peace.

More recently, we are informed by *Religious News Service,* five churchmen, including Dr. Wilfred E. Garrison, an editor of the *Christian Century,* and Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of New York, recommended to the President that he strip Mr. Taylor's post of its diplomatic and ambassadorial character by relieving it "of its limitation to the Vatican" and making Mr. Taylor the President's representative "to the moral and religious leaders of the world."

That seems to us to make good sense. It is hard to see on what ground the President could refuse so reasonable a request.

Correspondence

On the Ethics of Public Opinion Polls

Sirs:

Your editorial, "The Ethics of Public Opinion Polls" (THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST, Vol. XIII, No. 13), raises a number of grave questions, both as to morals and science. There can be no doubt that every person, including "pollsters," has a moral responsibility in connection with his acts. The difficulty stems from agreeing on the denotation of this moral responsibility. Your editorial recognizes the difficulty of this problem when you assert that the principle is clear, but that "the line is often hard to draw." In this case, our knowledge of Mr. Roper and Dr. Woodward, his associate, leads us to say: (a) Their conceptions of morality are as developed as ours are; (b) their concern for our problem, ditto. We believe, therefore, that your editorial would have served a better purpose if, in addition to pointing toward the principle, you proceeded, in fact, to "draw the line."

With respect to the problem of the questionnaire, I am sure you recognize that, in the field of polling, the construction of the questionnaire—as well as the construction of the sample—are among the difficult jobs. Opinions vary as to the wisdom of using open-end or multiple-choice approaches; as between using the "dirty words" or refraining from using the "dirty words" in the question. Your editorial has taken sides as to certain types of questions. You may be right, but all I can say is that, scientifically, there is not enough evidence yet to support your position or Mr. Roper's. The issue, therefore, may come down to "bad science" but not, I think, bad morals.

You have also assumed in your editorial the existence of a band-wagon psychology with respect to polls. This comment has frequently been made, but nowhere validated. Again, you may be right, and if you are, it will be a question of a good or bad science, not good or bad morals.

In short, as a number of commentators have pointed out, the polls have been useful predictively in such matters as elections, because the goal of the questionnaire is easily identifiable in an act. The polls have been less useful in matters of attitudes, beliefs, etc. This has been so, not because of questions of morality, but rather because the science is yet young. The amazing thing is that only twenty-two years ago, psychologists gave us the first social distance (attitude testing) questionnaire.

We share your interest and your concern for the problem. We do not share your judg-

ment as to the morality of the local organization. We do believe, as you undoubtedly do, that we will learn more about constructing a questionnaire and producing a sample as we proceed in this rather new field. You may be interested in one more fact: This summer, I attended the second annual conference of the commercial, as well as academic, interests in this field. We met at Williams College. One outcome of this meeting was the agreement to create a Committee on Standards. This, as you can perceive, is a step in the right direction.

FRANK N. TRAGER, *Program Director, Anti-Defamation League*

Sirs:

In response to your request for comment on an editorial dealing with public opinion polls on anti-Semitism, I send you the substance of a memorandum which was drawn up by Dr. Isidor Chein, Associate Director of our Commission on Community Interrelations. You will find it of some interest.

"There are a number of basic issues raised in this editorial. The broadest and most basic concerns a moral responsibility involved in public opinion polling. The editorialist is, no doubt, unaware that the pollsters themselves are most concerned with this responsibility and that the most intelligent discussions of the issue are to be found in their writings.

"This does not mean that the issue is by any means settled or that the skirts of the polling agencies are always clean. It does mean that the correctives (if any be necessary) are developing from within. In any case, when the editorial implies that the pollsters do not accept the 'moral obligation to take into consideration the consequences of their acts' he is far off the beam.

"The sub-issue of whether the polls influence 'the public mind' is at present largely a moot question. There can be no doubt that some individuals (e.g. our esteemed Governor) are strongly influenced. It is an open question as to whether these are typical. If most people are influenced, the influence is not a simple and direct one. There is reason to doubt the effectiveness of many elaborate propaganda campaigns. There is even more reason to doubt the persuasiveness of a release based on a single finding, especially if one does not take into account the context and the places wherein the findings are published.

"The editorialist protests that 'the very categories in which the whole inquiry was framed seem to us to be repugnant to the democratic idea to which America is committed.' Well, so is anti-Semitism. But what would the editorialist have the polling agencies do—phrase the questions in a manner that would render them incapable of eliciting anti-Semitic attitudes? The questions took the forms that they did precisely because they touch on known content of American anti-Semitism. The objective was not to demonstrate that anti-Semitism is widespread (and such a demonstration would, as the editorialist points out, hardly be news) but to place a quantitative estimate upon its spread.

"The editorialist states that it is obvious that these are leading questions which 'invite their own answer.' It is quite apparent that the editorialist does not understand the nature of a leading question. There is nothing in the wording of the question which indicates that the anticipated answer is 'the Jews' or even that one of the groups named does have more economic or political power than is good for the country. Even if they were leading questions, however, they are not necessarily useless, since a very pertinent question concerns the degree to which people are willing to be led into making anti-Semitic statements.

"It is curious that the editorialist does not take exception to the most exceptionable feature of Mr. Roper's statement, namely: 'The Jews stand out as chief object of United States racial and religious dislike.' The questions bore chiefly on the content of prevalent anti-Semitic attitudes and not upon antagonistic attitudes to other major minority-groups such as the Negro. No such general conclusion is, therefore, possible from the study. Mr. Roper should have concluded 'In the directions indicated by the questions, the Jews stand out as the chief object,' etc.

"Nothing said above should be construed as a defense or an attack upon opinion polling procedures. This is a large and a complex issue."

DAVID PETEGORSKY, *Executive Director, American Jewish Congress*

Appreciation from the UJA

Sirs:

Your editorial on the United Jewish Appeal campaign is as stimulating a summation of its purposes as I have seen. It comprehensively covers not alone the essential aims of the funds but even the methods by which the campaign needs to be conducted.

It is not new for me to see powerful, effective editorials in *The Reconstructionist*. I am personally grateful that this one should be on a subject in which I have a responsiblity and with respect to which we need the kind of sound, informed advice you have given.

HENRY MONTOR
Executive Vice-Chairman
United Jewish Appeal